AUTHENTIC

BONGO RHYTHMS

by BOB EVANS

A Complete Study: Contains illustrations showing the current method of playing the Bongo drums and all the Latin Rhythms

JOROPO	ÑAÑIGO
PASO DOBLE	GUARACHA
TANGO	RUMBA
CONGA	BOLEROS
CALYPSO	MERENGUE
BAION	SINGLE MAMBO
GUAJIRA	DOUBLE MAMBO
BEGUINE	CHA CHA CHA
SAMBA	SON
AFRO-CUBAN	MONTUNO
AFRO 6/8	

Alfred

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Bob Evans became interested in and began drumming at an early age through his father, who played drums. Drumming locally until induction into the Army he then spent 3 years in Special Service playing in marching bands and the post organized dance orchestras.

After service he enrolled in the Katherine Dunham School to study ethnic dancing and there was exposed to primitive drumming, at which he decided to give all his time and interest. At the Dunham school he studied authentic tribal and folk rhythms from two of Haiti's finest drummers, Papa Augustine and Narcisse.

After a tenure of playing Haitian songs and dances and the assimilation of Cuban rhythms he was soon featured as drum soloist in a number for an all Latin-American revue at the Boston Latin Quarter. This number was eventually placed in a long running show at the New York Latin Quarter.

Having worked primarily with dancers he became associated with dancer-choreographer, Peter Gennaro. As Mr. Gennaro's solo accompanist he played for 6 years for his numerous night club and television appearances plus his classes in Jazz.

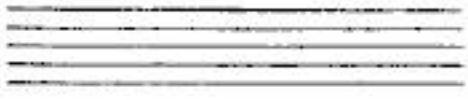
Mr. Evans was the rehearsal drummer for the Duke Ellington television show, "A Drum Is A Woman", composing all the solo conga drum sequences.

He has appeared in the following musicals in New York: "Guys & Dolls", "The Pajama Game", "Damn Yankees", and "The Music Man". In addition to theatre appearances he has also recorded with many of the famous Latin orchestras.

Mr. Evans today is considered to be one of the foremost percussion authorities on Latin-American rhythms and music, and his knowledge and understanding are very well demonstrated in this book.

HAB14

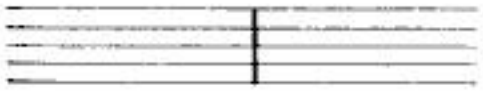
DEFINITION OF MUSICAL TERMS AND SIGNS



The five parallel and equi-distant lines represent the staff.

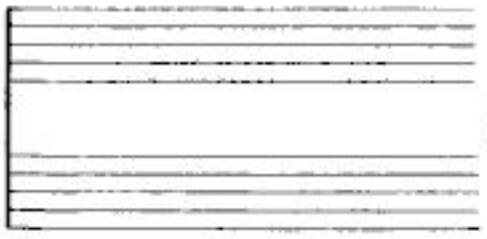
The "F" clef is the clef that drum music is written in. The Bongos are written in the "G" clef when used in score form with other drums.

The time signature establishes the meter which designates the number of beats to a measure and the note value that receives one beat.



The bar line, drawn vertically across the staff marks off the measures which are determined by the time signature.

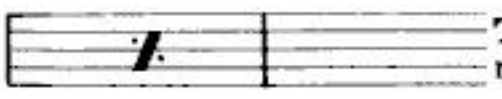
A double bar is placed at the end of a composition or before a change of time signature.



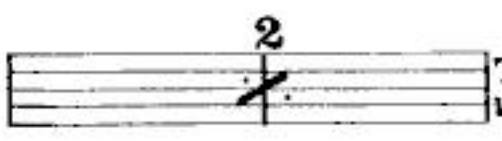
A brace is a line connecting two or more staffs, and it signifies that parts are to be played simultaneously.

The notes in the upper space are for the drum. The lower notes are beats for the foot and will help clarify the note values of the drum line.

These signs are repeat marks which means the section placed between them is to be repeated again.



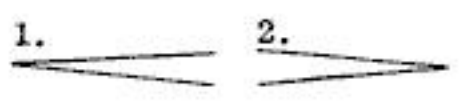
The simile means the measure is played exactly the same as the previous measure.



Two measures are to be played exactly the same as the previous two measures.

A wedge placed over a note designates a sharp accent.

The tie, placed between two notes means when the first note is played it is carried over through the time value of the second note.



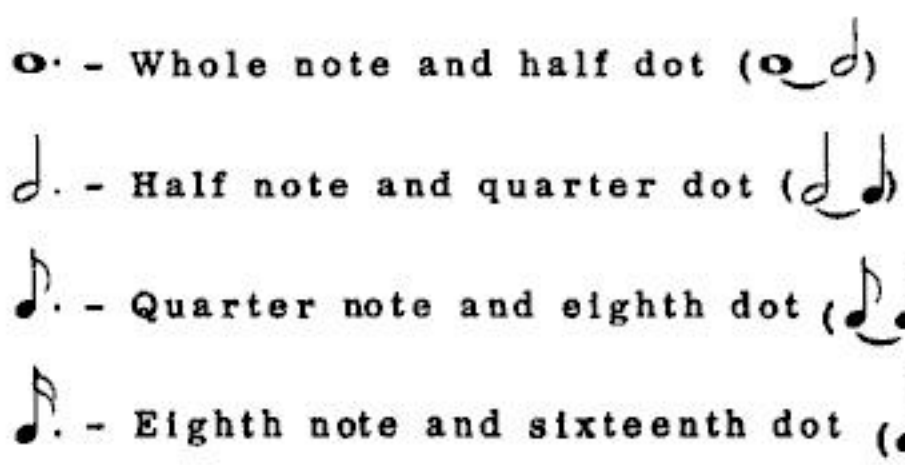
These are volume marks. The first one, CRESCENDO, represents a gradual increase in volume to the loudest point and the second, DECRESCENDO, represents a gradual decrease in volume from the loudest point to its softest.

NOTATION OF TIME VALUES

Notes, dots and rests are the means of representing time values. The note values are:

The following symbols represent the corresponding rest values:

A dot placed after a note is equal to half the value of the note after which it is placed:



Dots may be used after rests to increase their time values. The dotted rest values are the same as the dotted note values.

TIME SIGNATURES

C is the musical symbol for 4/4 time.

¢ is the musical symbol for 2/2 time.

Common Time

When the upper number of the time signature is written in 2, 3, or 4, it is called common time:

$\frac{2}{4}$, $\frac{4}{2}$, $\frac{2}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{2}{8}$, $\frac{3}{8}$, and $\frac{4}{8}$.

Compound Time

When the upper number of the time signature is written in 6, 9, or 12, it is called compound time and the accents divide the beats into threes or triplets:

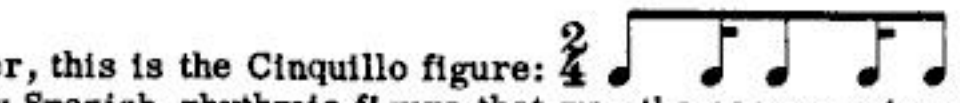
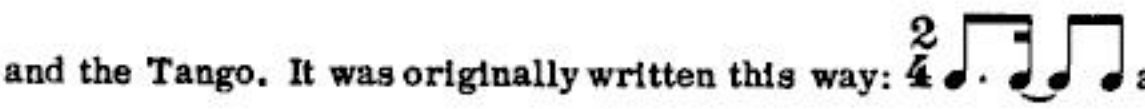
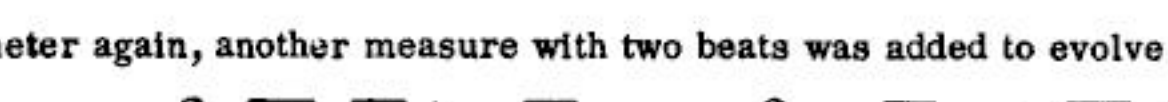
$\frac{6}{2}$, $\frac{6}{4}$, $\frac{9}{4}$, $\frac{12}{4}$, $\frac{6}{8}$, $\frac{9}{8}$, $\frac{12}{8}$, and $\frac{12}{16}$.

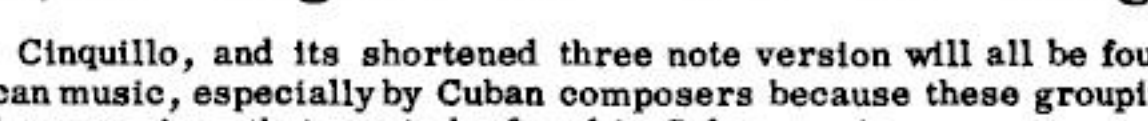
TUMBAO

The word Tumbao means the bass beats upon which other more complex rhythmic patterns are built. They provide the basic rhythm for other drums that take a secondary counter-rhythm. This bass beat is usually retained as a repetitious pattern throughout set rhythms and also improvisations.

THE CINQUILLO

The most important single rhythm in Latin-American music, the common denominator that binds the majority of them together is a group of five notes that have been evolved and known as a Cinquillo.

In a 2/4 meter, this is the Cinquillo figure:  . This present form was derived from an early Spanish rhythmic figure that was the accompaniment used for such Spanish dances as the Habanera and the Tango. It was originally written this way:  and then shortened down to just three notes: or . Eventually the original figure was lengthened to this grouping: . In 6/8 it became: and a three note version: 

In the 2/4 meter again, another measure with two beats was added to evolve into the extremely important clave rhythm: or  . The clave beat, the five note Cinquillo, and its shortened three note version will all be found in great profusion in Latin-American music, especially by Cuban composers because these groupings represent the deepest emotional expressions that are to be found in Cuban music.

THE BONGO DRUM

Because of the physical differences between the Conga drum and the Bongos, the technique for each is quite different. The Bongos are smaller drums with a higher pitch which permits very fast playing. The two heads allow for a very definite tonal difference because the one head is larger than the other. The two heads are theoretically tuned a fifth apart, notes C to G for instance, but actually this isn't necessarily so because of the effect of the weather upon the heads and the necessary tension needed in each head to produce a resonant sound. Tunable heads with tensioning rods are the most practical since they can be pitched higher and lower according to tonal preference or tighter and looser according to the degree of humidity. These heads are not as resonant as the large Conga drum but they produce a dryer, intense sound which is more penetrating, and ideal for accenting rhythms.

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Notation

In order to differentiate between the small bongo head and the large one, the notation will occur on different spaces in the staff. The large head will be written on the third space from the bottom while the notes for the small head will be written a space higher, or the fourth space from the bottom which makes reading for the two heads very easy. The notes on the first space are foot beats in order to clarify the bongo rhythms. The Bongo drum is written in the bass clef except when it is to be played simultaneously with a Conga drum. Then the Bongo drum part is written on the treble clef's leger lines and the Conga drum on the bass clef below them.

The following example shows the space notation for both Bongo heads:

Grace Notes

In the drum family the relation of the Bongos to the other larger drums is one of accents and embellishments. Because of the smallness of the heads this drum allows for a great velocity in the beats and rhythms used. Dexterity and fast stroking must be part of the playing technique. Grace notes are used constantly as they themselves are embellishment figures requiring clean stroking.

Grace notes receive no musical value and are written before the meter note as a smaller note. The Flam is written this way: and is executed with a slight time lapse between the two notes----------almost simultaneously.

The Three Stroke is written this way: with the accent occuring on the metered note. The Grace notes are usually executed much lighter than is the main note to which they are attached.

The Four Stroke is usually written as a triplet before the metered note this way: . In executing the Four Stroke the same dynamics apply as in the Flam and the Three Stroke. Longer grace note strokes usually take up so much metered time that they are written as notes of value within the measure or measures.

As the Bongo is mostly a counter-rhythm drum for accenting and embellishing, many of the written rhythms will sound better with the support of a Conga drum to supply a basic tumbao beat. The Bongo may use Congo drum rhythms if they are to be played alone which will provide them with more basic, stronger beats. Bongo and Conga drum rhythms are often interchangeable.

AUTHENTIC LATIN-AMERICAN RHYTHMS FOR THE BONGO DRUM

The rhythms in this section include those that are the most popular in the United States and the most representative of Latin-America.

The basic rhythm is given for each form plus additional variations. Some of the variations are to be used as tumbaos and also in conjunction with other percussion instruments while some variations are full enough in themselves to supply all the rhythm that is necessary. The amount of percussion needed and also what is available to you plus the special demands of a particular arrangement will determine which type of variation to use.

It is to be understood that throughout this section all repeat marks around the patterns and variations are to be interpreted as being a continuous repeat, that is, a one, two, or four measure phrase is to be repeated as long as it is desirable to do so. A one measure pattern could supply the rhythm throughout a whole number or be played only once.

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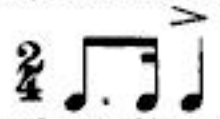
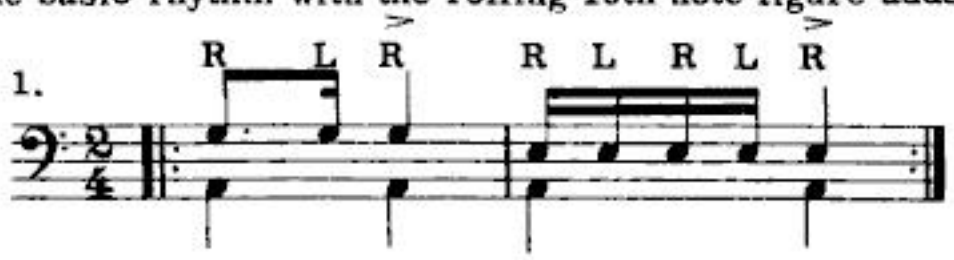
BAION

Another popular rhythm from Brazil is the Baion, a similar form to the Samba, and at times it is so alike that it's difficult to identify it as a Baion. The difference between the two is in the rhythmic pulse and general feeling. In the Baion the rhythm is more staccato while the melodic line is smoother and even flowing. In the Samba often the staccato feeling is in the melodic line while the rhythm has more of a rolling feeling. Like the Samba the Baion has its strong accent on the second beat of the measure. "Delicado" and "Anna" are Baions although other music may be played in this manner.

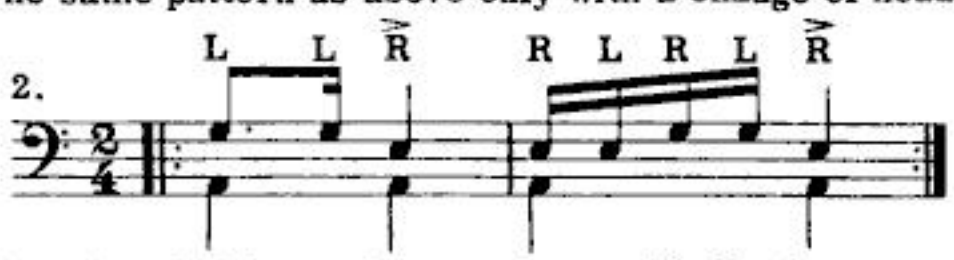
The basic rhythm of the Baion is the same as the basic Conga drum pattern:



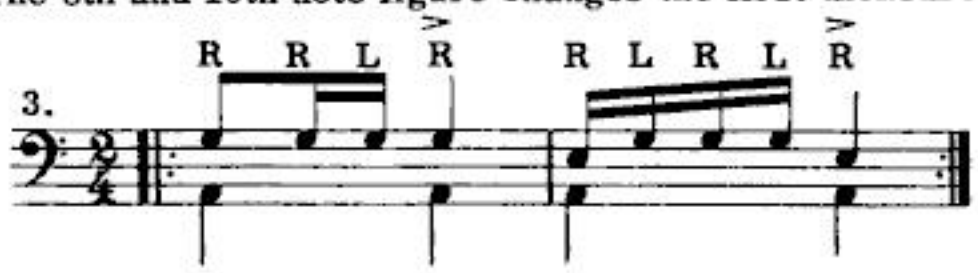
The basic rhythm with the rolling 16th note figure added:



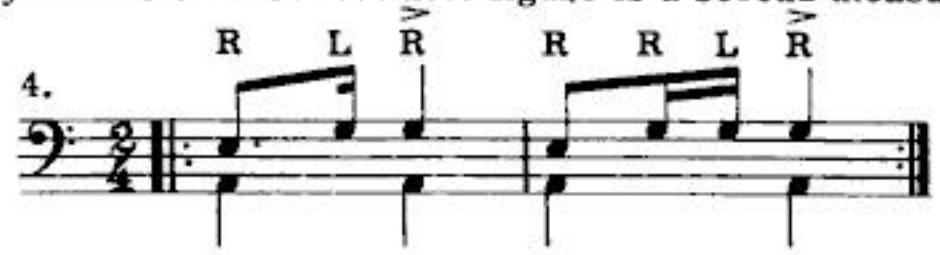
The same pattern as above only with a change of heads:



The 8th and 16th note figure changes the first measure:

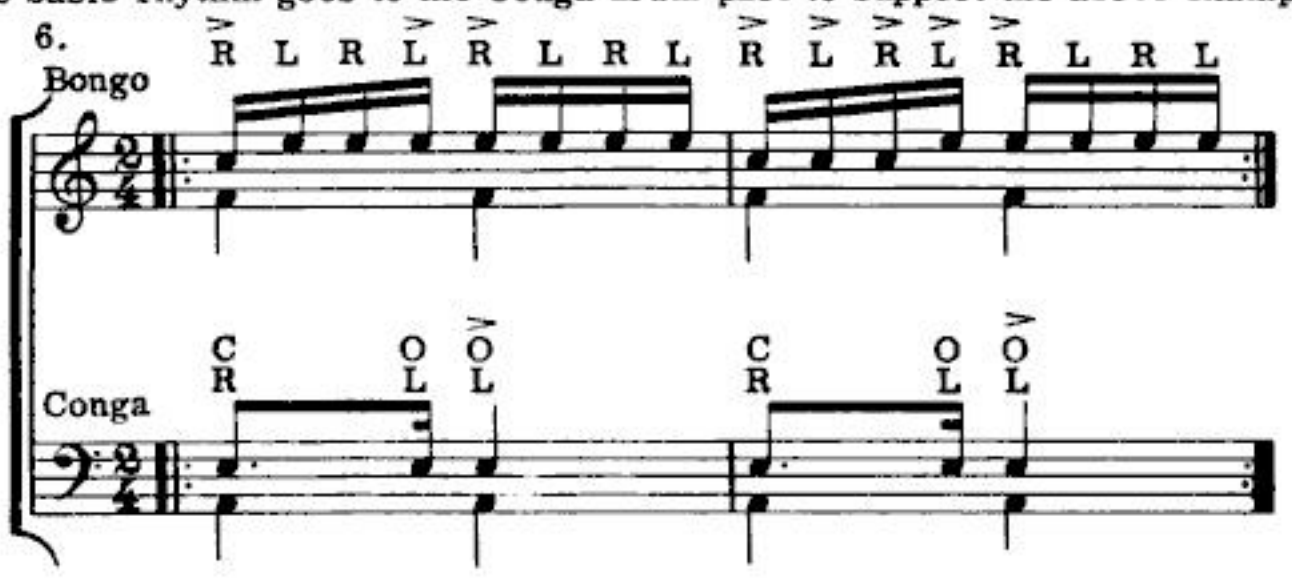


In this rhythm the 8th and 16th note figure is a second measure rhythm now:



The Baion rhythm defined by accents in the following all 16th note example:

The basic rhythm goes to the Conga drum part to support the above example 5:



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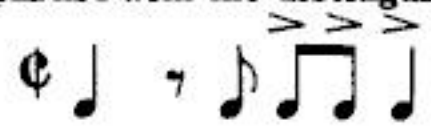
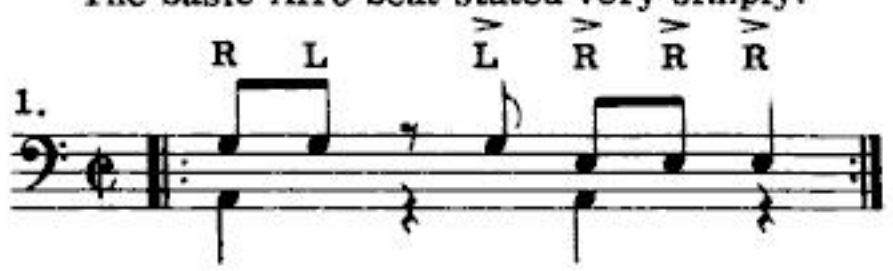
AFRO-CUBAN

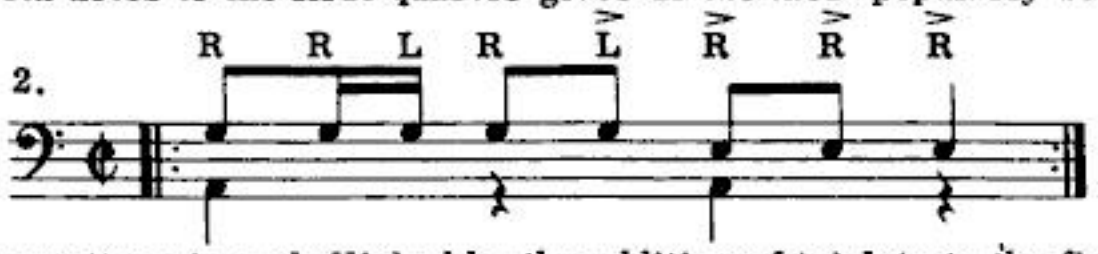
This rhythm was brought by African slaves into Cuba where it has remained unchanged except by embellishments. Unless composed specifically for a suite, Afro is not written because other slow Latin-American music in four such as the Bolero Rumba can be played in an Afro style. The basic rhythm is a one measure phrase with the distinguishing accents on "three and four". The basic rhythm:



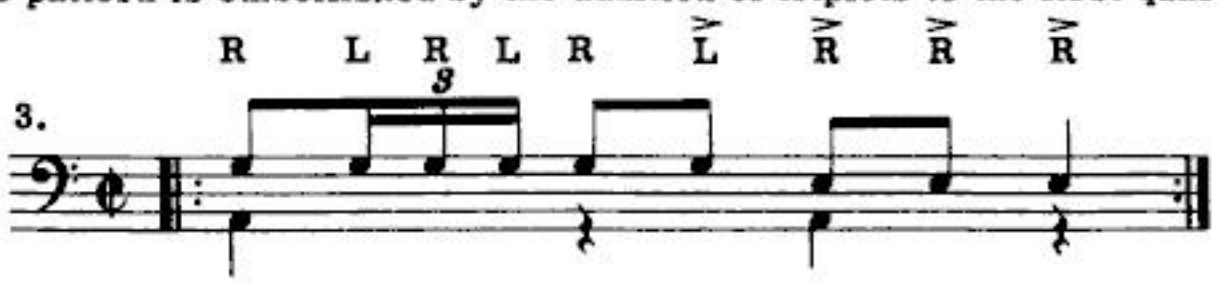
The basic Afro beat stated very simply:



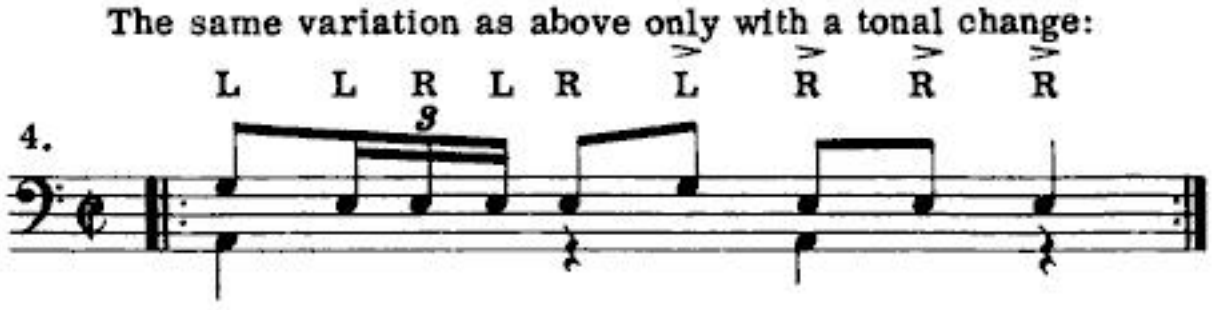
Adding the two 16th notes to the first quarter gives us the most popularly used Afro rhythm for Bongo drum:



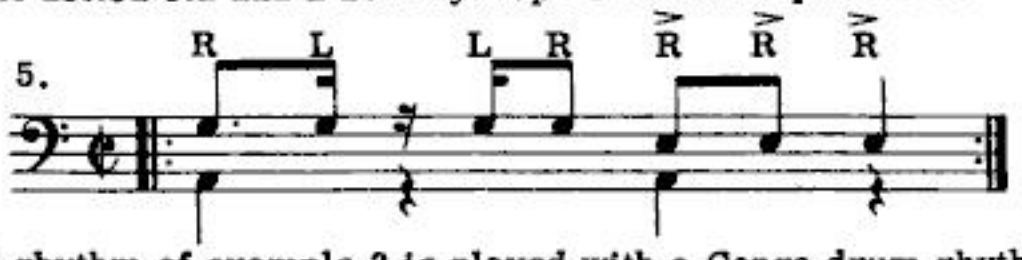
The above pattern is embellished by the addition of triplets to the first quarter note:



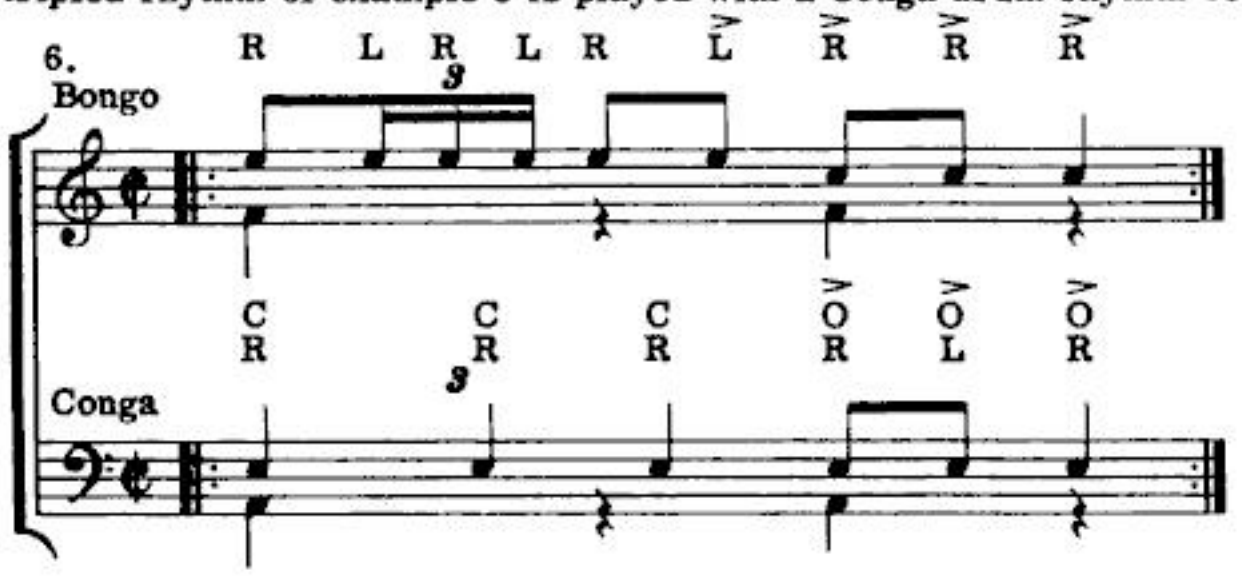
The same variation as above only with a tonal change:



A dotted 8th and a 16th syncopate the first quarter note:



The 16th note tripled rhythm of example 3 is played with a Conga drum rhythm containing quarter note triplets:



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